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ABSTRACT

Approximately 100 novels and other fictional works featuring Australian settings and themes are cited in this annotated bibliography. Appropriate for ages 10-15, the books were chosen for a non-Australian reading audience interested in learning more about the country. Books are listed under the following topics: Australia in the beginning, convict colony, discovery of gold, the new century (1900-1950), outback settings, country settings, city/town settings, humorous tall tales, fantasy and childhood, and short story collections. Five nonfiction books are also cited. Each entry lists author, title, publisher, age level, and includes a brief synopsis. A glossary of Australian terms is included. (KC)

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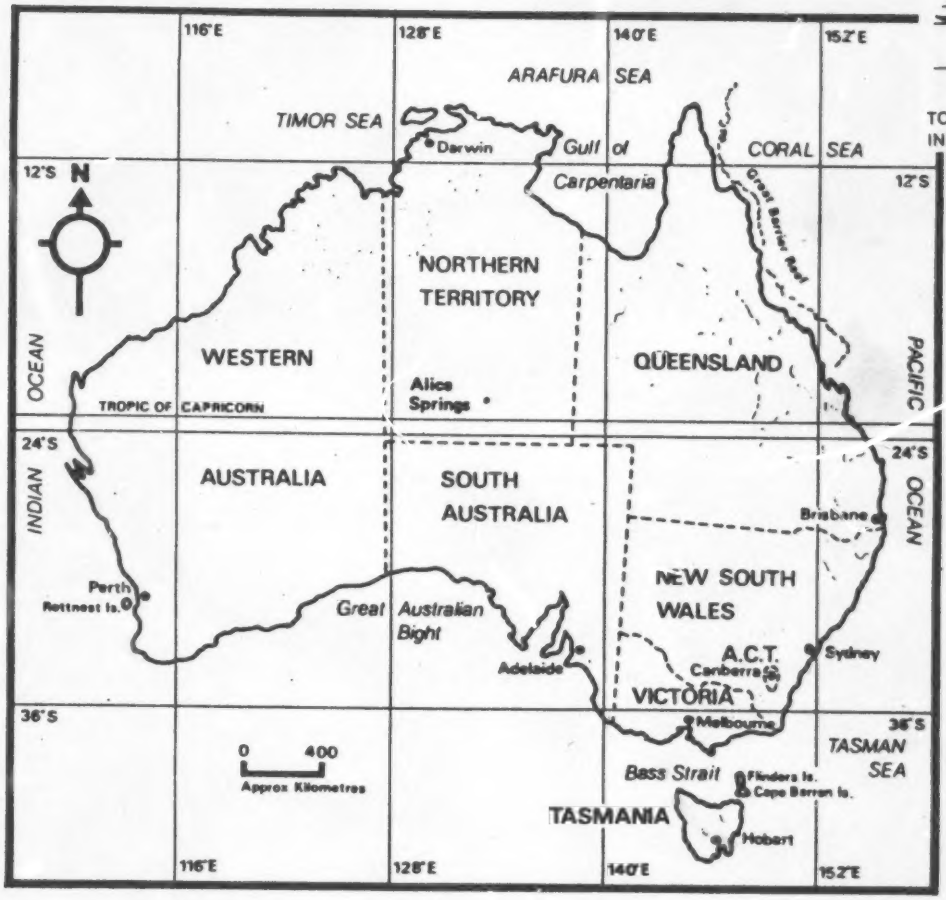
from the **DREAMTIME** ...

to **TOMORROW**



Good reading from & about

AUSTRALIA

for 10-15 year olds

selected by

FRANCES A. MILLER

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IF YOU'D LIKE TO ASK QUESTIONS, EXCHANGE IDEAS, KEEP IN TOUCH, try

Frances A. Miller - 24 Fairfax Rd., Bellevue Hill, N.S.W. 2023, Australia to have someone share books at library and teaching conventions; for the addresses of fellow teachers and librarians who would like to correspond with someone in the U.S.; for annotated booklists for young readers, ages 10-15, and ages 15 to adult; and for general information about who, where, how, and what in Australia.

Maurice Saxby - chairman of the English Department, Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education, PO Box 220, Lindfield, N.S.W. 2070, AUSTRALIA for information on the teaching of English, reading, and children's literature in Australia. (He is the author of a two volume reference work on Australian Children's Literature to the 1970's and highly resepcted in his field.)

Lucy Rees - 50 Booroondara St., Reid, A.C.T. 2601, AUSTRALIA. Mrs. Rees has worked in the field of children's books since 1955, knows many Australian authors personally, and is the originator of the Lu Rees Archives, a collection of all the international editions of Australian children's books.

Lauren Harmon or Belle Alderman - Canberra College of Advanced Education, PO Box 1, Belconnen, A.C.T. 2616, AUSTRALIA for information and materials on Australian children's authors; for an annual supplement to the "Select List of Australian Children's Books" (annotated). Lauren is the librarian in charge of the Lu Rees Archives, and Belle is chairman of the Children's Literature department at the college.

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AUSTRALIA

Nancy Shearer has been active in the Children's Book Council for many years and can find you any book in print. Many are in paperback.

IF YOU WANT TO KEEP UP WITH AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S BOOKS,

The Children's Book Council of Australia publishes Reading Time four times a year. Subscriptions run from January to December. Up until October back issues are supplied; thereafter subscriptions are credited to the next year. The reviews are forthright and unequivocating, and the articles, especially those by Walter McVitty, fascinating. Reading Time reviews international books and authors as well as Australian and New Zealand ones.

The Editor, READING TIME
PO Box 159
Curtin, A.C.T. 2065
AUSTRALIA

Rates:(The Post Office has international money orders) Airmail A$18
Surface mail (takes up to three months) A$11

AUSTRALIA IN THE BEGINNING: Aboriginal Myths and Legends

ROBERTS, Ainslie and C. Mountford **The Dreamtime Series** — Rigby

Aboriginal myths retold in sensitive, poetic prose, each one superbly illustrated by an original full-colour painting. Five volumes in the series. Age 10 up.

The Aboriginal Children's History of Australia — Rigby

The story of Australia from Dreamtime to the present told and illustrated by Aboriginal children. Unique, perceptive, and moving. For any age.

SCOTT, Bill **Boori** — Oxford

Boori means Everyman in the Aboriginal language, and Boori is what is best in all of us. In another time and place he was called Taran, and the author has written of a young man growing into the mantle of hero in a setting which is as unmistakeably ancient Australia as Prydain is an early Wales. High fantasy at its best. Age 10 up.

SCOTT, Bill **Darkness Under the Hills** — Oxford

In this sequel to **Boori**, the author brings everything together – the land, the spirits, the people, and the quest – in a superbly-told fantasy in which not one false note is struck. The people and their spirits grow out of the earth itself, and every event and its resolution arises from love or hate for the land. The final pages are tremendously moving. Age 10 up.

CONVICT COLONY: 1788–1850 Convicts and soldiers; exploration and discovery; free settlers; claiming the land.

PRICE, Pat **The Hills of the Black Cockatoo** — Penguin Puffin

Four young Aboriginal children survive the slaughter of their tribe by white men in Tasmania's early days, living naturally off the land until their adoption by another tribe. Their story is told with simple dignity and nicely illustrated in black and white. Age 10–12.

BENNETT, Jack **The Lieutenant**

The narrative is spare, the portrait of a man determined to survive against the odds, unforgettable, and the historic journey he makes in his small open boat with his steadily weakening companions, the more incredible because it really happened. Americans know this man as a tyrant; Australians as a Governor of the colony who championed the rights of freed convicts to become settlers. His name is not revealed until the last page and comes as a surprise. Age 12 up.

PHIPSON, Joan **Bass and Billy Martin** — Macmillan

A fictional recreation of the amazing voyages of George Bass and Matthew Flinders in tiny open boats to explore and map the coastline of the new land. For the historically-oriented, a fascinating chronicle. Age 12 up.

DONKIN, Nance **Johnny Neptune** — Angus & Robertson

Orphaned at birth in Sydney Town in 1790, the odds are against Johnny Neptune's survival, but survive he does and through the help of a memorable cast of characters and his own willingness to work hard he becomes one of the first farmers in the colony. The details of early colonial life are fascinating. Age 10–13.

NICHOLSON, J. **The Convict's Daughter** — Thomas Nelson

The richly-researched details of life on the convict transports and of the first dangerous and taxing journeys inland over the Blue Mountains to settle the farmlands on the other side make this an excellent story to illuminate the early years of the colony. Age 12–15.

CLARK, Mavis Thorpe **The Brown Land was Green** — Landsdowne Press

14 year old Henrietta works hard and long with her immigrant family to earn a piece of land in Victoria to call their own. An accident, a bush fire, and an unscrupulous overseer, whose vicious attacks on the Aborigines bring constant reprisals, almost defeat them. Excellent characterisations. Age 12–14.

DONKIN, Nance **House by the Water** — Angus & Robertson

The hero of this fictionalized recreation of the real-life Reiby family, is an impulsive 13 year old; wherever he is something is happening. Mary Reiby was sent to the colonies at thirteen, married a free settler, and as an astute business woman carried on successfully after her husband's death. This portrait of a prosperous family in Sydney's early days makes an interesting contrast to Ruth Park's **Playing Beatie Bow**, and others. Age 10–14.

GOLD! 1851–1900 Miners on the goldfields; Murray River paddle steamers; blackbirding (slave trade) in the Pacific; immigrants; cattle drives.

MARTIN, David **The Chinese Boy** — Hodder & Stoughton

An original, one-of-a-kind book. Written from the viewpoint of the Chinese boy, Ho, it takes place on the Victorian goldfields and chronicles the hardships, the violence, and the racial strife which actually took place. Like **Shogun**, it captures the essence of a culture utterly unlike the one born in the British colonies, as a boy from a highly-civilized background tries to survive in a harsh and often hostile land. A story to enhance the study of California gold rush days as well as Australia's. Age 11 up.

THOMPSON, Valerie **Rough Road South** Collins

Riding his beloved Simon, 14 year old Rob is forced to make the difficult 450 mile trek from Sydney to Melbourne alone, but there are dangers that a boy alone cannot overcome. His friendship with an American gambler on his way to the goldfields becomes essential to the success of his journey. Historically accurate – the time, the place, and the people are portrayed with insight and energy. Age 12–15.

THOMPSON, Valerie **Gold on the Wind** Collins

A sequel to **Rough Road South**, this follows Rob to the Victorian goldfields as he struggles to support himself until he can be reunited with his family. Characters are memorable and life on the goldfields realistically portrayed. Age 12–15.

MILLER, Ellen **Anna Yesterday** Collins

Vibrates with the feeling and life of Tasmania in the 1870's. A finely-drawn portrait of a child on her own in difficult, yet somehow simpler times. Age 10–13.

FATCHEN, Max **Conquest of the River** Methuen

Life on a Murray River paddle steamer is never dull, but when the river floods 14 year old Shawn and the crew of the old River Queen begin a desperate race to save the people of the river settlement. Wonderful characterizations. Age 10–13.

DURACK, Mary **To Ride a Fine Horse** Hutchinson

A biographical portrait of the author's grandfather who made his fortune on the goldfields and invested it in land, cattle, and horses. A wonderful picture of the men and the land they were trying to make their own. Age 11–14.

DAVISON, Frank D. **Man-Shy** Angus & Robertson

An animal story unique in its detail and understanding of the wild heifer which can never be tamed, and a celebration of the instinct for freedom that makes all those who have it impossible to defeat. Age 12 up.

MITCHELL, Elyne **The Man from Snowy River** Angus & Robertson

The author of some of the world's most popular horse stories retells the story by Australian poet Banjo Paterson of the young man who did the impossible and became a legend. Although based on the movie, Mrs. Mitchell's version reads like an original and her descriptions of Australia's high country are superb. Age 11–14.

THE NEW CENTURY: 1900–1950 Wars; Depression; a growing population; the New Australians

BRINSMEAD, Hesba **Longtime Passing** Angus & Robertson/Penguin

The story of the Truelance family and how they came to live in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney, how they carved places for themselves in the bush, struggled to make ends meet, fought and loved and grew up and moved away as time brought change to their mountain. Full of laughter and love. Age 12 up.

BRINSMEAD, Hesba **Once there was a Swagman** Oxford

9 year old Teddy, the youngest Truelance, is a resourceful country child so when she finds the milk cow, Rhony, has wandered off into the bush she goes looking for her. Without the help of Mr. Mungo Brodie and his dog Bones, she would never have come back. A story full of the sights, sounds, tastes and smells of country life. Age 10 and under.

PAICE, Margaret **Colour in the Creek** Collins

12 year old Alec Fletcher, oldest of four children in a family following their restless father from job to job during the 30's, narrates this story of life in a gold rush camp with a sense of humour and an eye for detail that makes the people and events come alive. Age 11 up.

PAICE, Margaret **Shadow of Wings** Collins

In this sequel to **Colour in the Creek**, Alec makes a decision not to follow in his father's drifting footsteps but to follow his heroes – Hinkler and Kingsford-Smith – into the as yet unexplored skies as a pilot. His decision is made without bitterness or drama, leaving readers the understanding that choices can be made in an atmosphere of reasoned thought as well as in turmoil and despair. Age 11–14.

THIELE, Colin **The Shadow on the Hills** Rigby

About a 13 year old boy, his best friend, their joint escapades in a German community in South Australia – this book has much in common with Richard Peck's **Soup**. In its gradual evolution of a friendship between the boy and a wild old hermit, it seems closer to Huck Finn. For thoughtful readers, a treasure. Age 12 up.

THIELE, Colin **The Valley Between** Rigby

Another of the author's country stories, this one has a superb cast of characters, a bristling rivalry between two of the town fathers that leads the young hero, Benno, into some hilarious scrapes and culminates in a terrifying train accident, and a Mark Twain humour that makes you laugh out loud. Age 12 up.

RUHEN, Olaf **Corcoran's the Name** Angus & Robertson/ Brockhampton Press

When 16 year old Bobby Corcoran decides to strike out on his own and become a drover he knows he has a lot to learn. As time goes on, he finds it isn't the droving that's hard, it's figuring out the people he meets along the way. From the pampered owner's son whose pride causes one disaster after another on a cattle drive, to the couple he tries to rescue from rising flood waters, he and the people he meets are hard to forget. Age 12 up.

METZLER, Paul **A Foreign Father** — Hodder & Stoughton

As a character portrayal of the young narrator's German father in Australia during and after WWI, this book works wonderfully. The setting is briefly Sydney and then a Queensland banana plantation where country life and people are drawn with humour and affection. The style is complex. Age 13 up.

FATCHEN, Max **Closer to the Stars** — Methuen

A tender, funny story of a closely-knit family living near an air force training base in WWII, and of the consequences, both good and bad, of the young hero's older sister falling in love with a pilot who must go away to war. The family sticks together, and the small boy's love for his sister is movingly illustrated in his efforts to defend and protect her from the town gossips. Age 12–14.

MARTIN, David **The Man in the Red Turban** — Hutchinson

The relationship between two very different characters – a troubled teenager looking for his beloved father, and a strong, gentle Sikh making his last trip as a peddlar along the Murray River during the Depression before he goes home to India and a wife he has not seen for years – gives this story its special impact. Like the same author's **The Chinese Boy**, an unforgettable portrait of two cultures trying to understand each other. Good illustrations. Age 13 up.

DAVISON, Frank D. **Dusty** — Angus & Robertson

By the author of **Man-Shy**, this is the story of a sheep dog, half-dingo and half-kelpie. Without false sentimentality, without anthropomorphizing, the author shows us Dusty and makes us understand his world and the conflicting instincts that spell disaster for him and the man who loves him. Age 12 up.

CLARK, Mavis T. **The Boy from Coomeroomunga** — Hodder & Stoughton

The boy is Doug Nicholls, an Aborigine who grew up on a government station, became famous as a footballer, and then as a pastor in the Church of Christ. Knighted by Queen Elizabeth in 1972, he became Governor of South Australia in 1976. The author's respect and love for this generous man is obvious, and so is her anger at the racial injustices he and his people have suffered. Age 11 up.

MARSHALL, Alan **I Can Jump Puddles** — Longman Cheshire

This is the story of a country childhood, the author's own, and of his spirited battle with his polio-crippled legs to run and climb and ride a pony. A battle which, in spite of the well-intentioned but even more crippling sympathy lavished on him by adults, he wins. A thought provoking book. Age 12 up.

WALKER, Kath **Stradbroke Dreamtime** — Angus & Robertson

Kath Walker, a respected Australian poet, tells twelve episodes from her own childhood in an Aboriginal settlement on Stradbroke Island, south of Brisbane. Some funny, some sad – all reveal a pride of spirit and a way of living and thinking that city people have never known. She also tells 14 stories from the Dreamtime in prose that sounds like poetry when read aloud. Age 10 up.

CONTEMPORARY LIFE: 1950–Present

OUTBACK SETTINGS: Survival; loneliness; the opal fields; Aborigines

BRINSMEAD, Hesba **The Ballad of Benny Perhaps** — Cassell

Utterly original in style, setting, characters, and flavour, this is the tale of Benny Perhaps – a university drop-out more at home in the remote outback than in Sydney – and Blue Petersen, part Aboriginal and part Scandanavian, a chocolate-coloured red-head with a thirst for education and the magic of the city. What happens to them and the 9 other members of their tiny opal mining community when 3 con artists from the city arrive to explore the site with a view to exploiting it makes a story that is as rich with incident and colour as a tale by Mark Twain, and as multi-faceted as the kaleidoscopic opal itself. Age 13 up.

CLARK, Mavis T. **The Min-Min** — Hodder & Stoughton

A thoughtful story of a young girl's search for a future beyond her family's life on a railroad siding on the vast, empty Nullarbor Plain, and of a small boy's emotions as he tries to preserve his own individuality and gradually learns that what he does affects others besides himself. Age 10 up.

NORMAN, Lilith **Climb a Lonely Hill** — Collins

14 year old Jack and his 12 year old sister are stranded when their uncle dies in a car accident while he is on holiday with them in the remote outback. In their concern for each other, and their fumbling attempts to teach themselves the skills they need for survival, they become real and important to the reader. Age 11–14.

THIELE, Colin **Fire in the Stone** — Rigby/Puffin

14 year old Ernie lives in one of the harshest environments in Australia – the inland opal fields of Coober Pedy. His mother has left, his father is an irresponsible bum who steals Ernie's money and abandons him. But Ernie, though he doesn't know it, is the stuff of which heroes are made. In his calm assumption of responsibility for himself, his pursuit of the treasure hidden in underground veins, his loyalty to friends in trouble and danger, and his ultimate decision to do what he must do, he makes a refreshing change from the last decade's self-centered teens. A vigorous, action-filled plot. Age 11–15.

OTTLEY, Reginald **The Sandhills of Yamboorah** **The Roan Colt of Yamboorah** **Rain Comes to Yamboorah** — Andre Deutsch

These three books about a lonely boy and his imaginative yet inarticulate love for a pup, a colt, a harsh old trapper, the station cook, the ranch hands, the aborigines, and the land itself are achingly real and unmistakeably Australian. The gentle, unassuming, self-contained teenager – himself loved and respected by the men and women of the station – remains with you long after the books have been read. Age 13 up.

THIELE, Colin **Ballander Boy** — Rigby

Illustrated with photographs, this is an account of a small white boy's adventures when he becomes lost in the bush in Arnhem Land on Australia's far north coast. Found by an Aboriginal tribe and ultimately returned safely to his family, he learns many things about the Aboriginal way of life and has a terrifying encounter with a crocodile in the process. Age 10 & under.

MARSHALL, James V. **Walkabout** — William Morrow (U.S.)

Seldom has the Australian outback been captured so completely as in this novel about two white children lost in the desert of Central Australia who survive only because they are found by an Aboriginal boy on Walkabout. The clash between two cultures and the question still troubling Australian authors of who really has most right to the land – those who live with it or those who live in spite of it – are an integral part of the story. Age 13 up.

COUNTRY SETTINGS: Family relationships; bush outings & bush fires; animals; challenge & survival

BAKER, Ivy **The Dingo Summer** — Angus & Robertson

A good story, combining a lonely boy's efforts to come to grips with his father's death, a beautiful dingo, and a villainous trapper, with well-defined relationships between characters. It captures the bush and its creatures for non-Australians to appreciate. Age 10–13.

CHAUNCY, Nan **Tiger in the Bush** — Oxford

Life in the isolated bush country of Tasmania is portrayed in this story of a young boy who nearly betrays his beloved world and a creature that may be the last of its kind to an inquisitive outside world. Age 11–14.

FOWLER, Thurley **Wait for Me! Wait for Me!** — Rigby

10 year old Robert may be the youngest in a family of four boys, his older brothers may be brave and athletic while he is forever spoiling their outings by getting lost, being treed by fierce goats, or forgetting to close the gate in the irrigation dam, but he comes through for his brothers in the pinch. A thoroughly satisfying story for anyone with older siblings. Age 10–12.

FATCHEN, Max **Chase Through the Night** — Methuen

When 3 bank robbers turn up in a tiny country town, they find its three teenaged inhabitants and several highly individual adults more than a match for them. There is terror in this narrative as well as laughter, suspense, and sorrow. The refusal of the teenagers to give up or give in is cause for strong reader involvement. Age 12–15.

FARRELL, Anne **The Gift-Wrapped Pony** **Calf on Shale Hill** **Eight Days at Guara** **Shadow Summer** — Hodder & Stoughton

The author was seventeen when she wrote the first of her four books about the Mitchell family – 17 year old David, 15 year old Val, 13 year old Leslie, and 11 year old Ian, and their affectionate parents – sharing the work on a dairy farm in northern Tasmania. The characters are living, breathing individuals whose relationships to one another grow and change, the dialogue rings absolutely true, and plots grow naturally from the setting and the personalities involved. A treat for the reader. Age 12–15.

THIELE, Colin **Chadwick's Chimney** — Methuen

14 year old Ket Tobin wants to find out whether a gang of thieves really lost something valuable down the sinkhole near his home as much as his two friends do, but he has too much sense to go with Con and Donny when they decide to explore the water-filled, bottomless caves themselves. When they don't come back, Ket goes after them, taking a desperate gamble to save their lives. An adventure story with the added dimension of well-drawn characters and a fascinating glimpse of an underground world few of us will ever see. Illustrated by Robert Ingpen. Age 11–15.

ROY, Thomas **The Curse of the Turtle** — Bodley Head Collins/Lions

Told in the first person by young Jimmy Brent who lives with his parents on an isolated station on the Cape York peninsula in far north Queensland, this is a both a mystery and a description of Aboriginal tribal life. The author's respect and love for the Aboriginal people comes through clearly. Age 13 up.

ROY, Thomas **The Vengeance of the Dolphin** — Bodley Head

A sequel to **The Curse of the Turtle,** this story of Jimmy Brent's voyage north with members of the Oona tribe to lay to rest a 25 year old curse is a warmly sympathetic portrayal of the Aborigines and of the land they cherish and appreciate in ways the white man never will. Age 13 up.

PHIPSON, Joan **The Bird Smugglers** — Macmillan

A 13 year old girl's discovery of drugged birds being smuggled on a jet to England and her increasingly desperate attempts to save them, makes gripping reading. Margaret faces the dilemma of what to do – maybe nothing? – with courage and resourcefulness, making us wonder how we would behave in the same situation. Age 11–14.

PHIPSON, Joan **No Escape** — Macmillan

A teenaged trapper, earning money for a coveted trip, is caught in his own traps and spends an agonising day and night with only a trapped rabbit, a snared bird, and his conscience for company. Thought provoking. High interest, easy reading. Age 12–16.

COUPER, Sue **Pelican Point** — Hodder & Stoughton

Reminiscent of Arthur Ransome but only 186 pages, this is a highly original book with a cast of nine enterprising children who camp out on Pelican Point one summer and share the telling of the story by contributing to a joint journal. The unique illustrations – sketches, photographs, and drawings by the "authors" – enhance the journal effect, and what they do when they discover their beloved Point is threatened by developers makes wonderful sense. Age 10–13.

PHIPSON, Joan **The Boundary Riders** Puffin

A story that could have happened. Three very real children are "bushed" and before they find their way back to civilization they must cope with hunger, a flooded river, and the needs of a sick woman and her baby as well as their own weaknesses and strengths. Age 10–13.

BRINSMEAD, Hesba **Pastures of the Blue Crane** Puffin

The growing affection and respect of a lonely old man and an equally lonely 16 year old girl for each other forms the core of this satisfying novel, with a cast of interesting minor characters, a mystery about the girl's parents, and a sympathetic portrayal of an old Kanaka – the last of the Pacific Islanders kidnapped by blackbirders and brought to Queensland in the 1860's and 70's to work in the sugar cane fields – as an added bonus. Age 13 up.

THIELE, Colin **Storm Boy** Rigby

A small boy living alone with his father on the South Australian coast has only two friends – an Aboriginal and a pelican named Mr. Percival. This is a story of love and friendship, drama and courage, and ultimately of death and the changes it brings. Superbly illustrated by Robert Ingpen. Age 9–11.

SOUTHALL, Ivan **Hill's End** **Ash Road** Puffin

Ivan Southall is a master at setting ordinary people, children and adults, in situations utterly beyond their normal routines, and following the growth and change that occur as they try, not always successfully, to meet the challenge. In **Hill's End** the challenge is a flood which destroys a tiny hamlet and separates seven children from the others. **Ash Road** is about a raging bush fire. Age 12 up.

CITY/TOWN SETTINGS: Personal conflict

FRENCH, Simon **Cannily, Cannily** Angus & Robertson

When your parents are "hippies" and you move from place to place often, and you feel different yourself – life in a new school isn't easy. When you are 11 year old Trevor Huon and you love your parents and you don't like the way things are going, you do something positive about it. This story of a clear-eyed indomitable boy with a secret dream is a delight. Age 10–12.

MARTIN, David **Mr. P and His Remarkable Flight** Methuen

Mr. P is a common city pigeon until he becomes the property of a lonely country boy newly arrived in the city. With the grudging help of a skeptical neighbour Vincent carefully and lovingly trains Mr. P to race. But when he sets Mr. P loose on his first long distance race, he has no idea of the dangers ahead for his beloved bird. Mr. P's odyssey is as grippingly told as Shiela Brunford's **Incredible Journey**. Age 11 up.

PAICE, Margaret **Run to the Mountains** Collins

Jacko, Beetles, and the reluctant Eddie escape from a Boy's Home in Sydney. Their subsequent efforts to "get somewhere" and to avoid discovery lead each of them to make dangerous and tragic choices. Highly recommended by a 12 year old boy. Age 11–14.

PHIPSON, Joan **When the City Stopped** Macmillan

Titled **Keep Calm** in the U.S. edition, this is an eerily realistic and evocative story of what happens to a large modern city when too many people refuse to do their jobs. A sensitive 13 year old tries to take care of his feisty little sister when their mother unaccountably vanishes. Gradually a memorable cast of characters is assembled and the small group makes its laborious way out of the dying city and away from the increasing lawlessness. Age 10 up.

ROLAND, Betty **Bush Bandits** Puffin

Set in the Kuring-gai Chase National Park on the outskirts of Australia's largest city, this story – like **The Bird Smugglers** – highlights the illegal traffic in Australia's rare birds and animals. The ranger's son enlists the help of his best friend and his cousin Ruth to save the life of a little koala whose mother has been killed by night-time thieves. A bush fire deliberately set by the thieves leaves Ruth alone with the tiny koala and, in a suspenseful climax, she goes to desperate and imaginative lengths to save it. Age 10–12.

MAYNE, William **Salt River Times** Puffin

A book that begs to be read aloud and enjoyed by a group, this is a story of city children and their river, and of an old mystery that is finally solved. The illustrations are outstanding. Age 10 up.

SPENCE, Eleanor **The October Child** Oxford

A moving portrait of a family threatened and changed by the arrival of an autistic baby. The effect Carl's presence has on the rest of his loving but bewildered family, especially his sensitive, musical brother, Douglas, is sympathetically explored, and though there is no solution there is eventually understanding. Age 12 up.

SOUTHALL, Ivan **Let the Balloon Go** Puffin

John Sumner is 12 years old but everyone treats him as if he were 6 because he is spastic. This is the excruciatingly suspenseful account of the day he decides to climb a tree. To prove that he can do what anyone can do. To set himself free. A beauty. Age 10 up.

WRIGHTSON, Patricia **I Own the Racecourse!** Puffin

How do you explain to an intellectually handicapped boy that he has been cheated and really doesn't own his beloved racecourse? If you are his loyal friends you don't. You find a way to let him keep his pleasure and his pride, and a way to buy it back before things become too complicated. Reading this funny, tender story makes you glad to be a member of the human race. Age 9–13.

NORMAN, Lilith **The Shape of Three**

What would happen if identical twins were separated by mistake in the hospital at birth, and one twin went to the home of a wealthy couple while their real child was brought up in a working class household with a brother who wasn't his? And by chance, when the three boys are twelve, the mistake is discovered? This unusual story explores the question of what is most important in family relationships from a brand-new angle; the dilemma is real and painful. Age 11–14.

THIELE, Colin **February Dragon** Rigby

The February dragon is Australia's summer bush fire. Its threat hangs over every Australian community from December to March, and this is the story of one small community which suffers through human carelessness. It is also a realistic and highly entertaining portrait of a country family by the author of **The Valley Between**. Age 10–13.

NORMAN, Lilith **A Dream of Seas** Collins

Beautifully written and illustrated, mingling dream and reality, this is the story of the everyday world of a boy mourning for his drowned father and the undersea world of a seal, and of their gradual coming together. Age 11 up.

BURKE, Susan **The Rottnest Bike Business** Oxford

A mystery/adventure set on Rottnest Island off the west coast of Australia. Four thoroughly likeable and enterprising children are involved in serious and mysterious goings on while helping recover lost and stolen bikes for the Island's bike hire company. Age 9–12.

THIELE, Colin **Blue Fin** Rigby

All his life 14 year old Snook has tried to live up to his fisherman father's tough standards, and all his life he has failed. So when disaster strikes their boat and leaves only Snook and his badly injured father and a load of tuna they can't afford to lose days away from home, Snook's courageous battle to save the Blue Fin and her precious cargo has readers cheering him on from start to finish. Age 11–15.

MATTINGLEY, Christobel **The Jetty** Hodder & Stoughton

The jetty is the heart and lifeblood of the little South Australian community, but Brad has always been afraid of it and the dark sucking water that swirls below it, even more since his father drowned at sea. When the jetty is threatened with demolition, only Brad hopes it will be torn down, until he learns the difference between what he fears is there and what really is. Age 12–14.

PHIPSON, Joan **A Tide Flowing** Methuen

A beautifully written novel that reveals much about living and dying and friendships and growing. Not specifically Australian, yet included here because by its universality of emotion and experience it identifies Australia as a place closer to us than we thought.

BENNETT, Jack **The Voyage of the Lucky Dragon** Angus & Robertson

The first two chapters of this dramatic and timely story are crammed with unfamiliar names and more facts about Vietnam than can easily be absorbed, but once the author zeros in on a single family to follow their courageous and terrifying journey in a small boat to Australia and freedom, it becomes impossible to put down. Age 12 up.

HUMOROUS TALL TALES

LINDSAY, Norman **The Magic Pudding** Puffin

Being the efforts of two pudding thieves, a possum and a wombat, to steal a magic pudding from the three heroes of the tale, Bunyip Bluegum (a koala), Sam, the penguin and Barnacle Bill, the sailor. The pudding himself is a very rude and unmannerly fellow as the classic illustrations clearly prove, but he tastes wonderful and can never be eaten up altogether. No wonder he is the object of so many plots and counter plots. Age 8–80.

STOW, Randolph **Midnite** MacDonald/Puffin

This outrageous tale concerns a not-too-bright 17 year old who, with the help of his five highly intelligent and faithful animals becomes a world famous bushranger and a millionaire several times over. Told with tongue firmly in cheek, the landscapes are truly Australian and the cadence and rhythm of the language lend themselves to reading aloud. Age 10–13.

WAKEFIELD, S.A. **Bottersnikes and Gumbles** Collins

Bottersnikes are obnoxious creatures who live in rubbish heaps, shrink when wet, and have ears that heat up when they get angry, which is often. Gumbles are fat, cheerful little creatures which can be squashed into small containers and used by Bottersnikes as slaves. Wonderfully funny situations arise out of the B's efforts to capture and the G's to escape, and the moral revealed only on the last page seems as perfect as it is unexpected. Nicely illustrated. Age 8–11.

MARSHALL, Alan **Whispering in the Wind** Nelson

A Roald Dahl-ish affair – part fairy tale, part tall tale – concerning a boy who becomes a prince, a kangaroo with a magic pouch, a grouchy giant, an unco-ordinated willy-willy, an extremely wicked witch, a sensitive Bunyip, and a not-very-smart-but-exceedingly-beautiful princess in need of rescuing. In its light-hearted way, it works very well. Age 8–11.

GREEN, Cliff **The Incredible Steam-Driven Adventures of Riverboat Bill** Hodder & Stoughton

Subtitled "the longest tall-tale of the River Murray", this is a wonderfully funny chronicle of the adventures of the most unlikely crew ever to steam up or down Australia's Mississippi. Yet the characters are so real it seems as if it could have happened – except of course for the Bunyip who is the cause of all their troubles. Age 9–12.

FANTASY AND MAGIC IN THE WORLD WE LIVE IN

CHAUNCY, Nan **Tangara** Oxford

A little girl in modern Tasmania wearing her great-great aunt's necklace meets an Aboriginal child in a place where no Aborigines have lived for nearly 100 years. Together they relive the last days of the tribe before its slaughter by two white men, and the image of the spirit of the Aboriginal child grieving for her people is poignant and unforgettable. A gentle story with quite an impact. Age 10–13.

PARK, Ruth **Playing Beatie Bow** Nelson/Puffin

By one of Australia's most outstanding authors, this is another on-of-a-kind. The 14 year old heroine is forthright and independent and when she finds herself inexplicably drawn out of present day Sydney and back into an utterly different life in Sydney in the 1870's, she becomes a vital part of the family who adopts her and eventually fulfills the task she was sent back in time to accomplish. The raucous, rowdy waterfront life of an early Sydney is superbly portrayed, and the characters come alive through the kind of detail and incident for which Miss Park is justifiably renowned. When I finished it, I went back to the beginning and read it straight through again. Age 12 up.

CLARK, Mavis Thorpe **A Stranger Came to the Mine** Hutchinson

This story of three brothers working their father's opal mine while he is away briefly on business works effectively on several levels. 16 year old Pete feels himself enough of an outcast – the dreamer in a practical family – the odd man out – without being the only one who sees the strange saucer-shape near their mine one night. But it is precisely because he is receptive to new ideas that the stranger comes to him and not to the others. The gradual unravelling of the mystery and Pete's unusual dilemma engage the reader's attention from start to finish. An intriguing book with a uniquely Australian setting. Age 13 up.

HURLE, Garry **Quickhoney** Methuen

This fantasy is set in such a sensible, realistic world that it seems perfectly plausible. A bitter recluse living in a cave has taught his bees how to communicate with him. When the forest is threatened by bulldozers, the bees turn for help to two children living nearby. The children are forced to protect the demolition crew from the mad recluse and the spirit of an earlier cave dweller over which the hermit, a truly evil creature, has gained malevolent influence. Age 10–13.

WAGNER, Jenny **The Nimbin** Puffin

Wonderfully funny and imaginative tale of a teenager whose beach bag is adopted by a small furry creature with a voracious, if peculiar, appetite and hands that get into all kinds of mischief including shoplifting. For Philippa it becomes a summer she'll never forget. Age 10–14.

PHIPSON, Joan **The Way Home** Hodder & Stoughton

When three children survive a car accident in the mountains west of Sydney, they find the journey to civilization and safety leads through other times both past and future. Accompanied by a Presence which only the two children who "still have both feet on the earth" are able to see and hear and trust, they come within sight of journey's end, only to lose the third member of their group because he has lost forever the vital ability to draw strength and sustenance from the land itself. Intriguing concepts dramatically explored. Age 11–15.

WRIGHTSON, Patricia **Down to Earth** Puffin

An hilarious story about a visitor from outer space and the efforts of an eminently realistic boy and his friends to keep their new mate out of the clutches of the police, psychiatrists, Child Welfare, and the United Nations long enough for him to catch his space ship home. Told in such a matter of fact tone it is hard not to believe it really happened. Age 9–12.

WRIGHTSON, Patricia **The Nargun and the Stars** Puffin

When young Simon, orphaned and bitter, goes to live in the country with elderly cousins, he finds himself drawn to the land and able to see and hear its older inhabitants – the spirits of swamp, tree, and earth – in the natural, homely setting of an Australian sheep station. When the peace of their homestead is threatened by the most ancient and terrible spirit of all, Simon and the two old people battle side by side to save it. Age 10–13.

WRIGHTSON, Patricia **The Ice is Coming The Dark Bright Waters Behind the Wind** Hutchinson

Wirrun, the modern Aboriginal youth is three times called upon by the Old Ones of his beloved land to save it from dark powers that would destroy it in these three magnificently conceived and written fantasies. No one who has ever been alone in dense bush or rain-forest, gazed across vast empty plains at the star-strewn sky, or watched the great sleeping form of Ayers Rock emerging gradually through the morning mist, will deny that this vast and ancient continent has a life and spirit world like no other. Few have succeeded in perceiving and illuminating this world for us as well as Mrs. Wrightson. Age 13 up.

SHORT STORY COLLECTIONS

GARFIELD, Leon **A Swag of Stories** — Rigby

A wide range of stories collected by a master story teller covering the early days of the colony to the present. Outstanding are the modern classic "The Vietnamese Baby and the Eagle" and Patricia Wrightson's "Three Nights of Wind" with its wry O. Henry ending. Age 11–15.

THOMPSON, Valerie **Colour of Courage** — Collins

All of these stories actually happened; all are a recorded part of Australian history from its beginnings to the present day; and all tell of a lifetime or a moment in the life of a young Australian called upon to act with courage. Age 10–14.

AUSTRALIAN AUTHORS **The Cool Man** — Angus & Robertson

A collection of short stories for teenagers by many well-known Australian authors, it includes brief biographies of each one as well. A useful introduction to authors and their styles.

LAWSON, Henry **Short Stories** — Rigby

There are many published editions of Lawson's stories. One of the best is Colin Roderick and Peter Lawson's illustrated collection. From the aching suspense of "The Drover's Wife" in which a young mother waits through the night with the family dog for a venomous snake to show itself so that she can kill it, to the Mark Twain humour of "The Loaded Dog", and many tales which share respect and affection for the strengths and weaknesses of his fellow men and women, Lawson's stories illuminate the spirit of mateship and generosity that is so much a part of Australian character. Age 12 up.

NON-FICTION assorted

ROLLS, Eric **Running Wild** — Angus & Robertson

A rewriting of the author's original work, **They All Ran Wild**, this is a fascinating, provoking examination – backed by exhaustive research and quotations from newspapers and letters of the times – of the devastating effect on the Australian continent by the importation of plants and animals by Englishmen trying to create another England. Anyone who cares about the natural world will be fascinated and horrified by the lessons to be learned from our ancestors' mistakes. Age 11 up.

MARTIN, David **I Rhyme My Time** — Jacaranda Press

Poems for older children – some with laughter, some with bite, and some with sad truth in them. Age 10–14.

DUGAN, Michael **The Early Dreaming**: Australian Children's authors on childhood — Jacaranda Press

A collection of essays by the authors themselves on their childhoods and on the source and inspiration for their writing. Includes Brinsmead, Clark, Fatchen, Mattingley, Norman, Phipson, Shelley, Southall, Spence and Thiele. Appendices on Children's Books of the Year and on further reading. Age 13 up.

McVITTY, Walter **Innocence and Experience** — Nelson

By one of Australia's outstanding critics in the field of children's literature, this is a collection of essays on eight contemporary authors of children's books and includes photographs of each author as well as bibliographies of their works and a brief comment from each on how and why they write. For students of Australian Literature – invaluable. Adult.

NILAND, Kilmeny **Feathers, Fur and Frills** — Hodder & Stoughton

A superb painting illustrates each short description of fourteen unusual Australian birds and animals, some of which appear in the preceding books. Age 7 up.

ARVO - afternoon
"ARE YOU RIGHT?" - Have you been helped?
- Are you okay?
AERODROME - small airport
SHE'S APPLES - no problems

BAIL UP - hold up (a stagecoach)
- tree; trap; pin down (I was bailed up by the bull and couldn't do my homework.
"BAIL UP!" - "Stand and deliver!"
BILLIE - a large can with wire handle, for cooking over an open fire
BISCUIT, BIKKIE - cookie
to BOOK - reserve a seat
- make an appointment
BITUMIN - asphalt
BIZZO - thing-a-ma-bob
BUSHRANGER - outlaw
BILLABONG - pond
BROLGA - native crane
BARRACKING - heckling
BUSH - dense forest; wilderness

CHIACK - tease; josh
COLLEGE - high school
CHIPS - french fries
CORDIAL - kool-aid type drink
COCKIE - (short for cockatoo) a lookout
- a farmer
COZZIE - (short for costume) bathing suit
CHEMIST - pharmacy
COACH - bus
CINEMA - film; movie theater
CARAVAN - trailer
CHOOK - chicken

DINK - ride as passenger on someone's bike
DAMPER - bread loaf baked in the coals of an open fire
DUNNY - outhouse
DOB IN SOMEONE - tell on them; turn them in
DIDGERIDOO - an Aboriginal wind instrument made from a long hollow stick

ESKI - cooler

FLAT - apartment
FOOTPATH - sidewalk

GROTTY (A GROT) - grungy (a grunge)
GRIDIRON - American football
GIVE SOMEONE THE PIP - bug them to death
GALAH - a pink and grey cockatoo
- a real dumb-dumb

JACKAROO - cowboy
JUMPER - sweater

KOMBI VAN - VW style camper van

LOO - toilet
LIFT - elevator
LOLLIES - candies
LARRIKIN - trouble-maker; bully; punk

MILK BAR - a 7/Eleven type store
MOPOKE - a small owl
MUSTER - round up

NEWSAGENT - stationery store
NAPPY - diaper
NIL; NOUGHT - zero; nothing
to NICK - to steal
to NICK OFF - to beat it
IN THE NICK - nude
IN GOOD NICK - in great shape

OVAL - playing field (can be any shape)

PANEL BEATERS - body shop
PUSH BIKE - bicycle
PASHING IT UP - necking (pretty passionately)
PORT - (short for portmanteau) suitcase
PERV - peep (as in peeping Tom)
PRANGED - dented
POOFTER - homosexual
PETROL - gasoline
PADDOCK - pasture

QUEUE - line

RUNNERS - jogging shoes
RAGING - partying
HAVING A RAGE - painting the town red
RUBBISH - garbage
"RUBBISH!" - "Baloney!"
RING UP - phone
RUBBER - eraser

SKINT - flat broke
SWAG - blanket rolled around clothes and other belongings, carried on the back
SWEETS - dessert
SHEILA - girl
STICKY BEAK - nosy person
SLOPPY JOE - sweatshirt
SERVIETTE - napkin
SKIVVY - long-sleeved, polo-necked shirt
SANGER - sandwich
STIRRER - trouble-maker
SANDSHOES - sneakers

TINNIES - cans of beer
TURF OUT - throw away
TUCKER - food
TUCKSHOP - school snack bar
TAPPED OUT - nothing left in the brain pan
TA - thank you
TIP - dump
TRANNIE - transistor radio

UTE; UTILITY - panel van
UNI - university
UNIT - apartment

WILLY-WILLY - dust devil; tiny whirlwind
WOG - any person not Anglo-Saxon Australian
WHINGE - whine

YOBBO - (see GALAH)
YAKKA - hard work
YABBIES - crawfish

ZED - the letter "Z"